

**Missouri Department of Social Services
Division of Family Services
Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
State Plan for FY-2001 – 2004**

PART I – PROGRAM PLAN

- 1. Provide a statement that identifies the State agency or agencies that administers, supervises or overseas the programs carried out under the plan (Section 477(b)(2)).**

The Missouri Department of Social Services will administer, supervise and oversee the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). Missouri's Division of Family Services is responsible directly to the Department of Social Services regarding service delivery and expenditures.

- 2. Provide a statement that indicates that the State agency will cooperate in national evaluations of the effects of the independent living programs implemented to achieve its purpose (Section 477(b)(2)(F)).**

The Department of Social Services, Division of Family Services, will cooperate in national evaluations of the effects of the programs implemented to achieve its' purposes.

- 3. Describe how the State has designed and conducts its program to achieve the purposes of section 477(b)(2)(A) and section 477(a)(1-5) of the Act to:**

- a) **Help youth make the transition to self-sufficiency;**
- b) **Help youth receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment;**
- c) **Help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational instruction;**
- d) **Provide personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults; and,**
- e) **Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age.**

Missouri has developed and implemented an extensive curriculum and an array of related services to prepare adolescents and young adults in the foster care system for employment, post secondary education and successful management of adult responsibilities.

Permanency planning reviews include a review of progress made toward transitioning the youth to self-sufficiency, as well as modifications to the plan as needed.

- a) In order to define "likely to remain in foster care until age 18", DFS, in accordance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), has identified children and youth who have

been in custody 15 out of the last 22 months as the target population. However, eligibility will not be limited to only this population. DFS has been reviewing and will continue to review individual case plans of all children and youth in the state's legal care and custody. Eligibility will also be based on the special needs of the child/family (e.g. severity of the abuse/neglect, individual case goals or presenting problems, etc.). With these identifiers, DFS will respond proactively in permanency planning by providing assistance in: pursuing a high school education; career exploration; vocational training; job placement and retention; training in daily living skills, budgeting and financial management skills; substance abuse prevention; and preventive health activities (including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention). Basic maintenance and medical services are also available for youth in foster care.

The Missouri Division of Family Services has for many years provided services and support for youth ages 15-21, who remained in state care and custody. Youth, age 15, were served via state only money through the CHOICES curriculum. Youth ages 16-21 are served through the Independent Living Program (ILP). The Independent Living Program operates to empower older youth, who are experiencing out-of-home placement, to develop the potential for self-sufficiency and for a successful transition into adult living. Maintenance, Medicaid, and other professional services are also available through the state's foster care program.

The Independent Living Program varies in each area of the state in order to meet the individual needs of its' population. Life skills classes vary in length from six to nine months of classroom instruction, which includes speakers, videos, group discussion and activities. The youth receive a small stipend and other incentives for attending group sessions and completing homework. Field trips, summer camps, weekend retreats, day seminars and community service can also be part of the program. Individualized instruction is available on an as needed basis. These services are designed to provide the skills, education, training and supports necessary to lead all youth to stable and permanent living situations as they exit the foster care system and transition to self-sufficiency.

Missouri recognized the need to improve the independent living skills services for younger adolescents in 1997. DFS expanded the independent living program by designing and implementing the CHOICES program for 13-15 year olds using state only funds. CHOICES is focused on soft skills with emphasis on healthy relationship building; self-esteem, decision-making, communication skills and other personal responsibilities. The curriculum-based, mostly classroom instruction, lasts between 8-12 weeks. Youth also attend quarterly seminars to maintain and strengthen their skills.

Youth who experience out-of-home care advise that they are much better prepared for the Independent Living curriculum if they complete CHOICES at the younger age. CHOICES was entirely administered using the state's Work First funding from FY 1998-2000. In FY 2001, Work First funding was reduced. To continue full financial support, \$400,000 was allocated from state general revenue funding. There are approximately 2,480 youth, ages 13-15, in out-of-home care at any given time. In an effort to serve this

population, DFS has elected to supplement CHOICES by using up to \$ 400,000 of CFCIP funds.

Youth over age 15, including those who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18, shall be enrolled in the Independent Living life skills classes. Youth shall be provided information regarding available services by their case manager, class facilitator or the IL Specialist. Services shall be used to assist youth to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility in preparation for the successful transition from adolescence to adulthood. Youth shall also be involved in planning to reach self-sufficiency and understand their personal responsibility in attaining their goals.

- b) Youth in out-of-home care are often one or more grade levels behind due to the disruptions in their lives. Education should be approached in a comprehensive and integrated manner in the early years. It is important to begin early with ongoing encouragement and support for higher education and to make the educational plan a vital part of the permanency plan. All youth should have a minimum of a GED as an overall goal.

More specifically, the case manager and/or IL Specialist or designee shall:

13-15 year old

Continue development of, and implementation of, an individualized education plan with each youth and make certain that they are enrolled in the CHOICES program as soon as they are eligible.

16-18 year old

Identify and assist in the development and implementation of an educational plan. Provide encouragement and support for those who have an existing plan. Enroll the youth in life skills training.

18-21 year old

Identify educational needs and provide assistance, support or assist in the development of an educational plan.

All youth should have a minimum of a GED as an overall goal.

All youth need opportunities to explore career options available to them. Providing young people with adult mentors who care about them, serve as career role models and can also assist them in striving for higher-wage positions with a continuing career pathway.

Based on the short and long term needs, interests, and strengths of the youth, an employability development/training plan will be negotiated and identified. The development of this plan should be a collaborative effort among the youth, IL Specialist or designee, and the case manager at the One-Stop Centers. One-Stop Centers are created as collaborations among several agencies (e.g. DFS Income Maintenance and Children's Services, Division of Workforce Development, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation). In those areas without One-Stops, referrals will be made directly to the above agencies.

The training plan should include an objective assessment of the youth's basic work readiness, and occupational skills as impacted by the youth's individual needs and interests. The assessment and training plan should identify the level and intensity of case management based on individual needs of the youth.

Job training may be accessed through the One-Stop Centers. The youth may also be eligible for other programs including the Workforce Investment Act and Welfare to Work. Other funding resources of One-Stop partners will be explored, including Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Corps, etc. Community resources and college and vocational financial aid, (i.e. Pell grants) should be explored and utilized before accessing CFCIP funds.

- c) DFS introduced the college/vocational school tuition/books program in December 1992. The intent of the program was to assist foster youth ages 16-21 with financial assistance in the payment of college/vocational school tuition and books to assist in the preparation for independent living. DFS will also offer former foster youth, who exited custody at age 18 or after, but have not reached age 21, the opportunity to access educational assistance. Requirements for educational assistance are:

- The youth must be a member or graduate of an IL Program group;
- The youth must demonstrate academic success or motivation in school (generally a "C" average or its' equivalency or as otherwise agreed upon within the plan);
- The youth must be accepted to an accredited public college/university or vocational school;
- All appropriate scholarships, grants and other financial assistance must be explored and exhausted;
- There must be reasonable assurance that the youth will graduate from the college or vocational school;
- The maximum expenditure of \$3,500.00 can be expended per youth during the eligibility period.

- d) The ability of young people transitioning out of, or who have exited foster care, to develop a support network, and to utilize the influence of informal role models to serve as mentors in a support network, is critical. While each of the young adult's needs is important in its' own right, we are increasingly learning the importance of significant adult relationships in supporting young adults during the transition to adulthood. Support services for foster and former foster youth must focus on a larger target than the

establishment of mentoring relationships. As we identify the important resources, which will be needed by these young adults to support their efforts to achieve independence, we must develop partnerships with public and private agencies that already offer the needed services. Emphasis is placed on connecting/referring youth rather than providing financial assistance. However, financial assistance may be provided on a short-term basis until other community resources are available or the young adult becomes self-sufficient.

Research has indicated that one of the key factors of why some foster children succeed when others do not is the presence of a significant adult in the lives of youth who succeed. Committed and skilled adults are essential to guide young people and help them maneuver in the world on their own. Although career role models serve a significant purpose, it must also include personal connections. The significant adult might be a biological family member, an adopted family member, foster or former foster family member, teacher, counselor, peer, case manager, minister or any number of other people. Any of these persons may already have a connection with the youth and be willing to serve as a mentor for the youth if asked.

- e) The CFCIP Support Application was developed to enroll foster youth and former foster youth, who have exited the foster care system at age 18, and are not yet 21 years of age, in CFCIP. The Support Application is meant to solicit information from the youth to identify and assess their strengths, interests, needs and current situation. In addition to any of the above-mentioned services (3b-3d), former foster youth are also eligible for financial and housing assistance.

We recognize that we may encounter emergency/crisis situations at any time throughout our lives. We look to family/friends for assistance. The young, emancipated, foster youth may not always have these resources. Emergency/Crisis Intervention funds are intended to be used as a **safety net** to assist these young adults when possible and appropriate. These funds shall be considered as short term, “quick fix” opportunities that will enable the young adult to continue to strive towards independence and self-sufficiency. These may include, but should not be limited to, food, emergency auto repairs, utility payments and emergency shelter.

The maximum spending limit per former foster youth (ages 18-21) is \$1,000.00 during the youth’s eligibility period. Included in the \$1,000.00 maximum is a \$200.00 maximum for auto repairs. Before the emergency funds are administered, the following shall occur:

- The needs of the eligible youth shall be assessed;
- Assist the eligible youth in developing an individualized self-sufficiency plan; and
- Refer and exhaust all available community resources.

One of the biggest steps youth will make in the transition from foster care to living independently is assuming the responsibility for their own housing. Housing options are limited by factors such as cost, availability of suitable housing, especially in the rural areas, and the willingness of landlords to rent to this young population. These young

adults are seeking guidelines and assistance to meet their own goals. Emphasis is placed on shared decision making and these young adults should be involved at every level of the assessment and delivery of services. The use of community resources must be maximized to assist in meeting housing needs.

Other support services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Life Skills – The life skills curriculum is both specific and intentional which provides youth with tangible and intangible skills. It will provide youth with real-world practice experiences. Former foster youth may be referred to life skills classes. They may only require a specific module to expand their skills and do not have to complete the entire curriculum. The youth may also take “booster/refresher” courses as needed.
- Transportation – This is a critical component for youth to maintain employment and/or to continue with their education. Transportation must be safe and reliable. Bus passes and taxi vouchers may be provided to assist youth. In rural areas where public transportation is not available, it is essential to connect youth with community resources, who will assist in meeting transportation needs.
- Health Care – It is suggested that foster and former foster youth are more likely to have physical and mental health problems than the general population. Therefore, it is imperative that physical and mental health needs must be met for youth to succeed in other realms. In the absence of Medicaid coverage, former foster youth will have limited access to health care. This problem is exacerbated by employment that typically does not provide medical, dental or mental health benefits. Given these obstacles, it is extremely important that youth be connected to physical, mental and dental health care in the community in which they live, i.e., local health departments, family planning programs, free health clinics, and other medical and mental health services based on ability to pay.
- Child Care – Appropriate and affordable childcare is a crucial need for young parents. It is difficult for the young parent to move towards self-sufficiency by obtaining an education or gainful employment when childcare is an issue and is not addressed. Programs such as HeadStart and Parents as Teachers are available. Other resources may include volunteer Resource Moms, school-based childcare and state subsidies.
- Other – Work related expenses including clothes, shoes, criminal checks, etc., application fees and credit checks may also qualify for assistance.

Maximum expenditures for any/all support service are capped at \$ 500.00.

Services to Youth Ages 18 – 20: Section 477 (a)(5) permits States to provide services to youth ages 18 through 20 years old who left foster care and have not reached their twenty-first birthday. States are required to provide services (including room and board) to, and expend funds on behalf of, youth who left foster care because they attained 18 years of age, but have not yet attained 21 years of age (Section 477(b)(3)). In the State plan, States should describe the approaches being used to address these provisions.

Services to Youth Ages 18 – 20:

Missouri has for many years provided services and support for youth ages 18-21 who remain in the agency's legal care and custody. While they are in foster care, these older youth are afforded the same services as their young counterparts. In addition, older foster youth receive education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment, prepare for and enter post secondary training and education.

DFS does not maintain current information, on a centralized database, on former foster youth once the youth has exited care and custody. In an effort to locate eligible former foster youth, DFS central office conducted searches on TANF/Income Maintenance, open and closed Family Centered Services and closed Alternative Care databases. Through a collaborative effort, DFS was permitted to access information from the databases of other agencies (Department of Correction, Division of Probation and Parole and Department of Motor Vehicles). Informational brochures will be made available to state and community agencies regarding CFCIP support. Letters will be sent to the eligible former foster youth acquainting them with the CFCIP. DFS recognizes that database searches alone will not provide current or accurate information and addresses for all the youth. Undeliverable and returned letters will be forwarded to county DFS offices for local searches.

DFS acknowledges that young adults (18-21), who have exited out-of-home care, face genuine and imminent needs on their road to self-sufficiency and independence. They may face many life challenges and often have little or no support in their endeavors. Former foster youth who exited at age 18 or after, and have not reached their 21st birthday will be eligible to receive the basic services offered to youth in out-of-home care. Basic needs of food and shelter will be a priority. Other services may include, but are not limited to crisis intervention/emergency funds, support/resource referrals, educational assistance and job training.

In order to provide the personal and emotional support for youth in transition or for youth who have exited foster care, DFS will provide youth with opportunities to connect to caring adults in the community, who will support and understand the difficult task of reaching self-sufficiency and independence. Please refer to information previously indicated in section 3 a) – 3 e).

Room and Board: The State must develop a reasonable definition of “room and board” and provide the definition in the State Plan. The State plan must include a description of the approach(es) begin used to make available room and board to 18 through 20 year olds. States are required to certify (by signing the Certificate form in Attachment B) in their State plans that no more than 30 percent of their allotment of Federal funds will be expended for room and board for youth who left foster care because they attained 18 years of age, but have not yet attained 21 years of age.

Room and Board:

The following guidelines are to be used in meeting housing needs based on the youth's comprehensive assessment:

- Refer and utilize all available community resources;
- Identify what services are already available;
- Identify where efforts should be concentrated to locate, recruit and cultivate resources to meet the youth's needs;
- Work with current contracted providers to develop options to meet the youth's needs;
- Develop current foster homes and transitional living advocates homes as resources for former foster youth; and
- Identify available Native American host families.

The IL Specialists and/or designee shall work with youth to encourage a safe and appropriate environment. Housing options may include, but are not limited to:

- Supervised apartments;
- Shared homes;
- Live-in adult apartments;
- Host homes;
- Boarding homes;
- Shelters;
- Section VIII or subsidized Housing; and
- Transitional living group homes/scattered site apartments.

Parameters for assistance that will be available under this identified need are food, rent, security and utility deposits, start up kits, basic furniture and necessities. CFCIP funds are meant to be flexible and short term to be used as a **safety net** to stabilize the youth and allow them to continue to be self-sufficient. Maximum limits were set to anticipate different cost factors in the different areas of the state. The Department of Social Services, Division of Family Services will assure that no more than 30 percent of the allotment paid to the State will be expended for room and board for youth who have left foster care when they reached age 18, but have not reached age 21. Missouri has dedicated approximately 18 percent or \$ 540,941 for FY 2001 to meet room and board needs. The percentage and dollar amount may increase in subsequent years based on recognized need, but will not exceed 30 percent.

ROOM & BOARD SERVICES

ITEM	MAXIMUM EXPENDITURE	FREQUENCY	SPENDING PARAMETERS
FOOD	1 time Start Up - \$100.00 max.	\$300 maximum \$50 per request	Food only, no alcohol or tobacco products
RENT	\$1,500.00	Per year	100% first month, 75% second month, 50% third month, 25% fourth month.
SECURITY DEPOSIT	\$1,000.00	Lifetime	Rent deposits only – first and last months rent
UTILITY DEPOSITS	\$300.00	Lifetime	Gas, electric, water, phone
START UP KITS	\$300.00	Lifetime	Household items, i.e., dishes, towels
BASIC NECESSITIES	\$300.00	\$100.00 Annually	Hygiene and cleaning supplies
BASIC FURNITURE	\$1,000.00	Lifetime	Bed, bedding, chest, table/chairs, sofa, lamp (used)

- 4. Briefly describe how all political subdivisions in the State are served by the program (if not in a uniform manner, please explain) (Section 477 (b)(2)(B)).**

All political subdivisions of Missouri commonly referred to as the 114 DFS counties and the City of St. Louis have access to CFCIP funds. The CFCIP Program is slightly different and varies in length in each area of the state in order to meet the individual needs of its population. Allocations are based on number of youth served and services provided.

- 5. Describe how youth of various ages and at various stages of achieving independence, are to be served, particularly with regard to services for (1) youth under 16, (2) youth 16-18 and (3) youth 18 through 20 (Section 477(b)(2)(C)).**

The description should include the identification of State statutory and/or administrative barriers, if any, which, in order to facilitate the State serving a broader range of eligible youth, need to be eliminated or amended. States should also discuss how they are developing services for those individuals “likely to remain in foster care until age 18” (Section 477(a)(1-3)). Some identifiers of individuals “likely to remain in foster care until 18” include, but are not limited to, age, ethnicity, presenting problems, case histories, and individual case goals and objectives.

DFS will serve youth ages 13 – 15, regardless of their permanency plan. Many of these children are likely to remain in foster care until age 18. State only funds will be expended for the initial \$ 400,000 of the program. CFCIP will supplement CHOICES with funding up to an additional \$ 400,000 as necessary. CHOICES is focused on soft skills with emphasis on healthy relationship building, self-esteem, decision-making, communication skills and other personal responsibilities. The curriculum-based, mostly classroom instruction, lasts

between 8-12 weeks. Youth also attend quarterly seminars, summer camps and/or support groups to maintain and strengthen their skills.

Foster care youth ages 16 – 21 will be served using federal CFCIP funds. Youth shall be provided information regarding available services by their case manager, through the life skills classes or by the IL Specialist. Services will be directed to assist youth in complementing their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility in preparation for a successful transition from adolescence to adulthood. Youth shall also be involved in planning to reach self-sufficiency and to understand their personal responsibility in attaining their goals.

DFS will respond proactively in permanency planning for any youth likely to remain in foster care to age 18. After a child comes into care, a family support team meeting is held within 72 hours. At that time a permanency plan will be developed. This plan will be reviewed every 30/60/90 days and at least every six months thereafter. Other services may include, but are not limited to: basic maintenance, medical services, pursuing a high school education; career exploration and training; vocational training; job placement and retention; training in daily living skills, budgeting and financial management skills; substance abuse prevention; support services and preventive health activities (including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention).

Former foster youth who left foster care at age 18 or after, but have not reached age 21 may receive much of the same services based on their needs as when they were in care. A comprehensive assessment of need will be completed with each eligible former foster youth who seeks assistance. In addition, they will also receive education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment, assistance in preparing for and entering post secondary training and education, emergency/crisis intervention funds, and room and board. However, medical services, except for information and referral, will not be available for this population to access.

Please refer to section 3. a) - e) and services to youth ages 18 –20 for more detailed information.

- 6. Describe how the State involves the public and private sectors in helping adolescents in foster care achieve independence. Beginning in FY 2000, States have had an opportunity to conduct meetings and plan activities with various partners and stakeholders to design and develop a CFCIP State plan for fiscal years 2001-2004. State should describe in detail how public and private organizations representing a wide range of stakeholders and consumers, in particular Indians Tribes, were consulted in the development of the State plan.**

States should describe their efforts: (1) to coordinate with “other Federal and State programs for youth (especially transitional living programs funded under Part B of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, abstinence programs, local housing programs, programs for disabled youth (especially sheltered workshops), and school-to-work programs...”, and; (2) to consult with and coordinate with “each Indian

tribe in the State” and ensure “that benefits and services under the program will be available to Indian children in the State on the same basis as to other children in the State” (certifications F and G, section 477(b)(3)). Also, States are encouraged to coordinate services with other relevant programs, including, but not limited to, the Court Improvement Program, Community Action Agencies, and Medicaid.

Subtitle C, section 121 of P.L. 106-169 permits States to expand Medicaid eligibility for youth transitioning from foster care. The State plan should describe how the state has utilized, or is coordinating efforts to utilize, the option under this law to expand Medicaid to provide services to youth ages 18 to 20 years old who have aged out of foster care. A State may provide Medicaid to all young people under the age of 21 who were in foster care under the responsibility of the state on their eighteenth birthday, or to “reasonable categories” of this group. If the State does not choose to provide Medicaid to all young people under the age of 21 who were in foster care under the State’s responsibility on their eighteenth birthday, the State plan should describe what “reasonable categories” of children it has chosen to provide Medicaid services to, if any.

Also, in order to fulfill the intent of the Act, which is in keeping with positive youth development, States are strongly encouraged to include youth, those presently in care as well as former foster youth, as critical stakeholders in the development of the State plan (Section 477(b)(2)(E)).

DFS hosted grant-planning meetings on May 2000 and in March 2001 by bringing together a diverse group of individuals, agencies and community groups, from both the public and private sectors. The invitees, included the following: foster care youth and youth who have exited the foster care system, administrators within various state departments, including the Division of Family Services, Division of Youth Services, Division of Probation and Parole, Department of Health, Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Executive Director for the State’s Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth Grantee; Transitional Living Program contractors, State IL Coordinator and Area IL Specialists, Heart of America Indian and Southwest Missouri Indian Centers, foster parents, representatives from Missouri Mentoring Partnerships, family/juvenile court representatives, community youth and mental health programs advocates, and faith based organizations.

The purpose of these grant planning meetings was to develop a set of suggested criteria which can be used to guide Missouri’s multi-year state plan and to provide formalized information/data sharing among key stakeholders. Many of the participants had limited knowledge on CFCIP. A powerpoint overview of CFCIP was provided. Each Area Independent Living Specialist or their representative provided the participants with a framework of available programs and services offered to the youth in their area. The participants were apprised of CFCIP changes and how it now incorporates the existing Independent Living Program, supplements Missouri’s CHOICES program for 13-15 year old youth, and expands services for former foster youth ages 18-21 who have exited care at age 18 or after, but have not reached age 21.

Transitional Living providers, as well as the State's only Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth Grantee – Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, have a great deal of expertise in working with these youth and were an integral part of the development of this State Plan. DFS will continue to work with those who serve youth in the age range of 16-21 to ensure continuity of care. Other providers are equally important in providing a continuum of care rather than an overlapping of services. DFS will continue to stress the importance of state and local coordination and collaboration of services.

In addition to the coordination and collaboration as indicated with the members of the grant planning committee, DFS local staff will contact local housing authorities to inform them about CFCIP and encourage them to apply for grant awards through the Family Unification Program (FUP). The new grant will include provisions to encompass foster care youth. This will provide time-limited Section 8 vouchers (up to 18 months) for youth transitioning out of foster care.

Quarterly meetings were held with the IL Planning Committee to solicit their input into policy, procedures, and program planning for the CFCIP. The Planning Committee has representation from all IL Specialists, first line supervisors, Area and Central Office administration.

Although Missouri recognizes that medical coverage is a real need for former foster youth, the State has opted out of the Medicaid Option at this time. The Division of Medical Services has requested a New Decision Item for FY 2002 to address medical needs for this population. It is therefore extremely important that youth are connected through information and referral services to physical, mental and dental health care in the community they live, i.e., local health departments, family planning programs, free health clinics, and other medical and mental health services based on ability to pay.

There are Area Youth Advisory Boards (AYAB) in Missouri's seven administrative areas. Members of the AYAB are elected to serve on the State Youth Advisory Board (SYAB). Members of the SYAB consist of foster care youth, alumni and community members. The purpose of the SYAB is to:

- Provide youth with an opportunity to give policy and procedural input to DFS administrative staff and the Juvenile Court;
- Provide meaningful leadership training and experience for board members, and;
- Empower board members who, in turn, can empower children and youth who have experienced out-of-home care.

Quarterly meetings were held with SYAB to provide the youth with an opportunity to assist in the design and implementation of the CFCIP beginning in June 2000. Foster youth and alumni are experts in the knowledge of the needs of youth in out-of-home care. The SYAB also assisted in the design of a brochure and the CFCIP Support Application that eligible youth will be required to complete.

7. Describe the objective criteria the State uses for determining eligibility for benefits and services under the programs, including the process for developing the criteria (Section 477 (b)(2)(E)).

Youth in out-of-home care ages 13-21 years will be served in this program. Additionally, former foster youth who exited the foster care system at age 18, and who are not yet age 21, are among the eligible population. Any youth ages 13 –15 in the legal care and custody of DFS will be eligible for services through CHOICES program which is supplemented through CFCIP. Any youth ages 16 – 21 in the legal care and custody of DFS will be eligible for Independent Living services through CFCIP. Any former foster youth who exited at age 18 or after, but have not reached age 21 will be provided with assistance and services, as indicated above, through CFCIP funding.

8. Describe how the State ensures fair and equitable treatment of benefit recipients (Section 477(b)(2)(E)).

Any of the above eligible youth will be provided services regardless of race, gender or ethnic origin.

Public Comment: Certification E of Section 477(b)(3)(E) requires States to provide “all interested members of the public at least 30 days to submit comments on the plan”. In preparing the State plan application, States should describe how the comments received from the public (both written and oral), influenced the contents of the State Plan.

Draft copies of the FY 2001-2004 State Plan were forwarded to all grant-planning participants. In addition, all Transitional Living Program contractors, Missouri’s 45 judicial circuits, the Office of State Court Administrators and the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association received copies for a 30 day public comment period beginning April 27, 2001.

Overall, respondents were excited about the program. It was indicated that the grant proposal is comprehensive and well thought out. They felt the services now available to eligible former foster youth would be a wonderful resource that has been gravely needed by this population. Our community partners are excited about the program, its possibilities, and the building or strengthening collaboration efforts.

There were two primary identified weaknesses that concerned the respondents: 1. Inadequate health care and the state’s decision to opt out of the Medicaid Option at this time. 2. Many youth are emancipated and released from foster care prior to age 18 and services are not available to these youth.

**Part II – FY 2001
CFCIP Funds Requested**

Federal Funds Requested \$ 3,005,228

State Match Amount \$ 751,307

Sources Children's Treatment Services

Foster Care

Residential Treatment Services

Amount of Federal Funds to be Used for Room and Board \$ 540,941

States must also complete line 9 of the CFS-101 that they submit with their Annual Progress and Services Report by June 30, 2001.

I certify that I am authorized to submit the CFCIP application for FY 2001 funds in the State of Missouri.

Application submitted by:

Dana Katherine Martin

Name

Director, Department of Social Services

Title

Signature

Date

Approval Date: _____

Signature of ACF Regional Administrator or Hub Director

Attachment A

CHECKLIST FOR PREPARING THE CFCIP STATE PLAN, FEDERAL FYs 2001-2004

Please provide the page number where each section can be located in the plan.

- X 1. The State Agency (or agencies) that administers, supervises or oversees the programs carried out under the plan is identified. On page #: 1 .
- X 2. The State Agency has indicated that it will cooperate in national evaluations of the effects of the programs implemented to achieve its purposes. On page #: 1
- X 3. The State has described its program design, which includes goals, strategies, and an implementation plan for achieving the purposes of:
- Helping youth make the transition to self-sufficiency;
 - Helping youth receive the education , training and services necessary to obtain employment;
 - Helping youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions;
 - Providing personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults; and,
 - Providing financial, housing, counseling, employment and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age. On pages #: 1 – 9
- X 4. The State has set a reasonable definition of “room and board” and provided the definition in the application. On page #: 8 – 9
- X 5. The State has described how all political subdivisions are served by the program. On page #: 9 .
- X 6. The State has identified and described how eligible youth are being served by the program to achieve independence. On page #: 1
- X 7. The State has described how it involved the public and private sectors in helping Adolescents in foster care achieve independence. On page #: 11 – 12
- X 8. The State has described the objective criteria that was used for determining eligibility for benefits and services under the programs; and the process used for developing program criteria. On pages #: 1 – 2
- X 9. The State has provided a description of how it ensures fair and equitable treatment of benefit recipients. On page #: 13
- X 10. The State has provided a description of who it consulted with in developing the plan, and the ways in which this was accomplished. On pages #: 11 – 12
- X 11. The State has provided a period of public comment which allows “all interested members of the public 30 days to submit comments on the plan” and submitted the results of public comment in the application. On page #: 13
12. Attachments A and B have been signed and dated by the State’s Chief Executive Officer or delegate (if authorized by State law).
- X 13. The state has identified the amount of Federal funds for which it is applying. On page #: 12 .

Signature of Chief Executive Officer

Date

**STATE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S
CERTIFICATIONS
for the
CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM**

As Chief Executive Officer of the State of Missouri, I certify that the State has in effect and is operating a Statewide program relating to Foster Care Independent Living and that the following provisions to effectively implement the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program as in place as of September 30, 2000.

- (1) The State provides assistance and services to youth who have left foster care because they have attained 18 years of age and have not attained 21 years of age [Section 477(b)(3)(A)];
- (2) Not more than 30 percent of the amounts paid to the State from its allotment for a fiscal year is expended for room and board for youth who have left foster care because they have attained 18 years of age and have not attained 21 years of age [Section(b)(3)(B)];
- (3) None of the amounts paid to the State from its allotment are expended for room or board for any child who has not attained 18 years of age [Section 477(b)(3)(C)];
- (4) The State uses training funds provided under the program of Federal payments for foster care and adoption assistance to provide training to help foster parents, adoptive parents, workers in group homes, and case managers understand and address the issues confronting adolescents preparing for independent living, and will, to the extent possible, coordinate such training with the independent living program conducted for adolescents [Section 477(b)(3)(D)];
- (5) The State has consulted widely with public and private organizations in developing the plan and has given all interested members of the public at least 30 days to submit comments on the plan [Section 477(b)(3)(E)].

Date(s) of consultation: March 6 – 8, 2001

**STATE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S
CERTIFICATIONS**
(continued)

- (6) The State has made every effort to coordinate the State programs receiving funds provided from an allotment made to the State under subsection (c) with other Federal and State programs for youth (especially transitional living youth projects funded under part B of title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (see Attachment E for a listing of the Transitional Living Program Grants); abstinence education programs, local housing programs, programs for disabled youth (especially sheltered workshops), and school-to-work programs offered by high schools or local workforce agencies [Section 477(b)(3)(F)];
- (7) Each Indian tribe in the State has been consulted about the programs to be carried out under the plan; there have been efforts to coordinate the programs with such tribes; and benefits and services under the programs are made available to Indian youth in the State on the same basis as to other youth in the State [Section 477(b)(3)(G)];

Date(s) of consultation: March 6 – 8, 2001

- (8) Adolescents participating in the program under Section 477 of the Act participate directly in designing their own program activities that prepare them for independent living and the adolescents are required to accept personal responsibility for living up to their part of the program [Section 477(b)(3)(H)];
- (9) The State has established and will enforce standards and procedures to prevent fraud and abuse in the programs carried out under the plan [Section 477(b)(3)(I)].

Signature of Chief Executive Officer

Date